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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DUBLIN 000046

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EI](#)

SUBJECT: GERRY ADAMS ENCOURAGES RENEWED EFFORTS TO UNITE
THE ISLAND; SLAMS IRISH LEADERSHIP

Classified By: Pol/Econ Section Chief Ted Pierce;
reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

Summary

¶1. (C) During a January 21 speech at Mansion House commemorating the 90th anniversary of the first meeting of Ireland's first Dail (Parliament), Sinn Fein's Gerry Adams sought to reinvigorate the quest for a unified Ireland. He stated that the Ireland of equality and solidarity envisaged by the first Dail had not been achieved and that the current woes of the Irish economy are a result of the partition of the island. Adams blamed the Irish government for "high" levels of poverty, unemployment, and homelessness, and declared that duplication of health services, education systems, and economies, North and South, was not logical. He cited the socialist objectives of the original Dail and accused the Irish administration of allowing the rich to prosper at the expense of the common laborers. Sinn Fein plans to extend its reach among the Irish Diaspora as it seeks to rally funds and support for a united Ireland. However, Adam's rhetoric reveals a large gulf between the Republic of Ireland of today and that imagined by the Sinn Fein of the 1920s. As long as such a gulf exists, it is unlikely that Sinn Fein will regain its past prominence in the Republic. End Summary.

Celebrating 1918

¶2. (U) Adams began his remarks with a stark criticism of British Imperialism stating that it "has much to answer for" and asserting that the actions of the British in carving up the Middle East had laid the foundations for today's conflicts in Palestine and Iraq. He then celebrated the 90th anniversary of Ireland's declaration of independence from Britain (which had taken place in the very room Adams was speaking in).

¶3. (U) Central to Adams' speech was the Sinn Fein manifesto pledge of 1918 that it would establish a national parliament able to "speak and act in the name of the Irish people, and to develop Ireland's social, political, and industrial life for the welfare of the whole people of Ireland." He cited the landslide victory for Sinn Fein in the 1918 elections and lamented that it was the last instance in which the people of Ireland voted in a single election.

Condemning Ireland's Leadership

¶4. (U) Adams condemned the partition of Ireland, stating that it has distorted and stunted the economic and political potential of the island and has led to an environment where unemployment, poverty, and homelessness are increasing.

Further, he noted the poor quality of infrastructure and public services. Adams then asserted that Irish natural resources are exploited solely for the benefit of private multinational corporations, to the detriment of local communities. Adams noted that the Dail had met in the same room on the previous day to celebrate the 90th anniversary -- one day before the actual date. (Note: Sinn Fein used the historic "Round Room" in Mansion House on the actual day of the 90th anniversary simply because they managed to book the room before the Irish government. End note.) Adams announced that Sinn Fein had offered to share the room with the Irish government and lamented that the government would not accept Sinn Fein's condition that the event include co-equal speaking rights for Irish and Northern Irish participants.

¶5. (U) Adams cited the socialist intent of the 1916 independence proclamation and criticized the government for abandoning those principals. He quoted Liam Mellows' statement that "a political revolution in Ireland without a coincident economic revolution merely means a change of masters." Sinn Fein, he stated, has "warned time and time again that (the Irish) government was mismanaging the economy." Adams then accused the government of "protecting its wealthy friends in the banks, the developers, property speculators, and private health insurers" and "targeting the sick, the elderly, and children."

Moving Forward

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¶6. (U) Adams called for a renewed focus on Irish language and arts and for an increase in state borrowing to fund capital projects coupled with a reduction in consumption taxes (VAT) to fuel consumer spending. He called on the North to press the British Government for greater fiscal autonomy and the ability to independently manage the economy. He criticized the existence of duplicate systems on each side of the border.

¶7. (U) As in past speeches, Adams urged the formation of a single republic on the island. He advocated a shared Ireland in which Unionists are welcome and integrated. He cited the continued good will in the United States for a united Ireland and vaguely outlined a plan to mobilize the Irish Diaspora in support of this goal.

Comment

¶8. (C) Adams' speech highlights the gulf that has grown between the traditional all-island socialist dogma of Sinn Fein and the modern Republic of Ireland, which is now dominated by educated employees of multinational corporations for whom reunification of the island is a fairly low priority. As long as such a gulf exists, it is unlikely that Sinn Fein will regain its past prominence in the Republic.
FAUCHER